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FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7883
INFO RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 4941
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 4654
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 1434
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE 1792
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 0830
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 1068
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE 1799
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIASS/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIASS/Joint Staff WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIASS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFIASS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUMICEA/USSOCOM INTEL OPS CEN MACDILL AFB FL

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PESHAWAR 000054

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/18/2019
TAGS: PTER MOPS PGOV PK
SUBJECT: NWFP: ANOTHER CARGO TERMINAL ATTACK NEAR PESHAWAR

REF: A) PESHAWAR 29, B) 08 PESHAWAR 527

CLASSIFIED BY: Lynne Tracy, Principal Officer, Peshawar,
Department of State.

REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) In the second attack in as many months, suspected militants destroyed trailers carrying coalition supplies bound for Afghanistan near Peshawar on March 16. While the police and fire brigade responded within 40 minutes of the attack, militants had already departed the scene. In a previous attack in early February, police response was quicker and less cargo was damaged. As militants are being pushed out of Bajaur and Khyber agencies because of military operations some militants may have settled, at least for now, near the provincial capital where they face a poorly equipped and less well trained security force - the police. End Summary.

Militants Destroy Containers and Cargo

¶2. (C) In the second attack in as many months, militants bombed and burned approximately 16 trailers carrying coalition supplies including vehicles bound for Afghanistan, on the edge of Peshawar in the predawn hours of March 16. While the police and fire brigade responded within 40 minutes of the attack, militants had already departed the scene. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

¶3. (C) According to local authorities, approximately 100 militants overpowered the four guards present at the terminal, injuring one while two others sustained burn injuries. The attackers entered through the main gate of the terminal, placed explosive charges under the trailers, poured gasoline on the cargo and fired rockets at the site. Drivers claimed that they had been fearful of a militant attack on their cargo and had requested extra police protection for the site. Officials for the contract carrier (Agility) have not had the opportunity to date to inspect the site of the attack to assess the damage.

Only Military Cargo Burned

¶4. (C) Pictures of the site taken after the attack show only trailers with military cargo were burned, while hundreds of containers near-by, with unrelated cargo, were left untouched.

Previous Attacks

¶5. (C) In a previous attack in early February, police response was quicker and less cargo was damaged (Ref. A). A more serious attack during December left 250 trailers destroyed and one guard dead (Ref. B).

Trucks Again Forced to Park Near Peshawar

¶6. (S) Agility has recently been forced to use Peshawar again as a trans-load site due to the Government of the Islamabad Capital Territory denying them use of terminal facilities at Tarnol, part of the ICT. Drivers who since December stayed overnight along the route, choose to remain outside the troubled province.

Only logistical or administrative paperwork difficulties have been cited by previous drivers as reasons for an overnight stay in or near Peshawar even since the December attack.

Comment

¶8. (C) As militants are being pushed out of Bajaur and Khyber agencies because of military operations some may have settled, at least for now, near the provincial capital where they face a poorly equipped and less well trained security force - the police. Police response may have been slower this time, than during the February attack, due to the size of the militant force, resulting from additional militants relocating in or near Peshawar from conflict areas, and the deployments of the police

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related to the lawyers' "Long March" which decreased the numbers of police available.

TRACY